

Rethinking Current Domesticities: Methodology Tools for an Intersectional Feminist Approach

*Replanteando las domesticidades actuales:
Herramientas metodológicas para un
enfoque feminista interseccional*

Abstract. In the context of converging crises and emerging alternatives regarding the design possibilities and architectural tools, the design of a domestic environment requires a critical approach based on feminism and intersectionality. This paper introduces a design methodology that challenges the current architectural conventions surrounding domestic design. It explores and experiments with alternative approaches centered on inclusivity, equality, and collectivism. The projects featured in this paper — *Her Practice: Biases, Glitches, and Oppressive Values or a Happy Domesticity*, *Moments of Familiarity*, and *How to Create Anew?*— form the core of our research and design endeavors. The first project delves into the examination of gender roles within domestic environments, while the second emphasizes the creation of temporary home environments within Asylum Seeker centers in the Netherlands. The third project is a community-driven initiative focused on establishing alternative ways of thinking and communicating the design of current intimate infrastructures. The central objective of the paper is to present an ongoing research practice that fosters the cultivation of a revised pedagogical setup where architecture and design discipline acknowledges domesticity in a multidisciplinary approach according to feminism and intersectionality.
Keywords: domesticity, intersectional feminism, design process, participation

Resumen. En el contexto de crisis convergentes y alternativas emergentes en cuanto a las posibilidades de diseño y herramientas arquitectónicas, el diseño de un entorno doméstico requiere un enfoque crítico basado en el feminismo y la interseccionalidad. Este documento presenta una metodología de diseño que desafía las convenciones arquitectónicas actuales en torno al diseño doméstico. Explora y experimenta con enfoques alternativos centrados en la inclusión, la igualdad y el colectivismo. *Su Práctica, Momentos de Familiaridad y Cómo crear de nuevo?* son los proyectos que se presentan en este artículo. El primero profundiza en el examen de los roles de género en entornos domésticos, mientras que el segundo enfatiza la creación de entornos temporales dentro de los centros de solicitantes de asilo en los Países Bajos. El tercer proyecto es una iniciativa impulsada por la comunidad centrada en establecer formas alternativas de pensar y comunicar el diseño de las infraestructuras íntimas actuales. El objetivo central de este documento es presentar una práctica de investigación continua que fomente el desarrollo de un marco pedagógico actualizado. Este marco alienta a los campos de la arquitectura y el diseño a abrazar la domesticidad a través de un enfoque multidisciplinario informado por el feminismo y la interseccionalidad.
Palabras clave: domesticidad, feminismo interseccional, proceso de diseño, participación

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Introduction

The starting point of the present research stems from the observations of domestic realms, aiming to question and reinvent the levels of familiarity, creativity and imagination using the design practice as a soft power for more equal and inclusive interactions. Recognizing that architecture and interiors often adhere to outdated spatial concepts influenced by the Vitruvian man in floor plans of churches for example or Le Corbusier's Modulor, there is a pressing need to establish a new paradigm rooted in an intersectional feminist approach to design. Architects and designers are responsible to restart the conversation about the role of post-contemporary design and its contribution to creating spaces and objects that emphasize the social critical and political aspect of it and certainly serve the needs of the individual. Radical domesticity requires a never-ending question of how we approach the domestic roles, always considering the social, political and cultural behavioral patterns of the present reality.

The concept of domestic space encompasses multiple dimensions—including material, psychological, spiritual, gendered, social, cultural, and political aspects—that reflect the complex human relationships both within and beyond the house (Briganti & Mezei, 2012). Susan Stewart argues that discussions about small spaces cannot be dissociated from the social values attributed to private spaces, particularly how the concepts of the domestic and the interior influence the formation of an individual's inner life (Stewart, 1993). The marginal attention to the intimate scale of design among most designers suggests that a feminist perspective on design remains largely unexplored (Buckley, 2020). Domestic environments profoundly shape our navigation of broader social and cultural systems throughout life, dominating our existence since we spend the majority of our lives within these spaces. This dynamic encompasses not just the spatial relationships and their inhabitants but also the various elements that define and often prescribe these interactions. Daily domestic life is infused with established standards, values, clichés, traditions, and stereotypical patterns, yet each individual also constructs their unique domain of “familiar interpersonal encounters” (Pantazopoulou, 2022, p. 20). Engaging feminism in the design of domestic environments aims firstly to analyze how design artifacts, systems, processes, and methods either perpetuate or confront oppression across intersections of gender, race, class, ability, and other identities; secondly, it seeks to pioneer “alternative ways of doing design otherwise” (Place, 2023, p. 2).

At that point, architects and designers are responsible to restart the conversation regarding the design of a domestic environment, the design not only of a house but of all those elements that compose a home. However, the majority of architectural methods and tools frequently utilized by architects and designers in their design processes still adhere closely to modernist values, prioritizing functionality, simplicity, and minimalism. These approaches often follow a “default user” pattern where in Western society is considered as white, cisgender and male (Place, 2023), rather than embracing the multidimensional aspects of each individual. This adherence tends to marginalize users, keeping them at a distance from the core of the design

process and contributing to a communication language that is exclusive and challenging to comprehend. Darin Buzon argues that modernism's claim as the definitive universal aesthetic reflects its roots in white supremacy, demonstrating a similar prescriptive superiority complex (Buzon, 2020). "Design that effectively drives transformation must address to the distinct experiences of marginalized individuals and critically engage with larger systemic issues and their underlying causes" (Place, 2023, p. 17).

In the context of converging crises and emerging alternatives regarding the design possibilities and architectural tools, the design of an interior space such as a domestic environment requires a critical approach based on feminism and intersectionality. Working within this framework, means that the design process is aware of the lines of race, age, gender, cultural and geographical background. Kimberlé Crenshaw emphasizes that both feminist theory and antiracist policy must incorporate an intersectional understanding of gender and race to effectively address the needs of Black women in policy formulation. Similarly, in the context of design justice, it is argued that design demands must also be grounded in this intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1991). An intersectional feminist approach extends "beyond mere leveling with patriarchal structures" (Mareis & Paim, 2020, p. 208) by offering a framework that considers the conditions under which domestic environments are created and how design can be intertwined with equality.

Following an intersectional feminist approach within the interior architecture process, as it is the design of a domestic environment means that the creation of a space is aware of the diverse needs and also experiences of the individuals that later will inhabit the space. This pertains not only to the final outcome but also to the entire design process. The pivotal question here is how the interior architecture discipline pursues indeed methods that activate behaviors both by users and designers towards an inclusive design approach regarding the domestic environment. The primary emphasis of the methodology tools presented in this paper is on how architects and designers can cultivate their skills to not only produce spatial designs that embody inclusivity and equality but also incorporate these values seamlessly into the design process itself. The three case studies discussed in this paper emphasize the importance of collaborating with diverse thinkers to deepen our understanding of race, gender, and class dynamics. This is crucial for anyone who want to move beyond one-dimensional ways of thinking, being, and living (hooks, 2010).

Positioning myself as an intersectional feminist designer, my goal is to use intersectionality in order to "signify things other than the conclusions" of this on-going research topic (Ilmonen, 2020) practicing the "feminist objectivity" that Donna Haraway connects to translating knowledges across different situated communities (Haraway, 1988). Western cultural narratives on objectivity typically reflect the prevailing ideologies about the relationship between mind and body, proximity and responsibility. Feminist objectivity focuses on specific, localized knowledge rather than on transcending or separating the subject and object. This perspective requires us to be accountable for our perceptions and understandings (Haraway, 1988). I approach the role of the designer more as a facilitator and

practitioner rather than an expert, believing that everyone can be a **potential** expert according to their own unique lived experiences. My research aims to approach the design of an intimate infrastructure as it is a domestic environment through a radical perspective, shifting our focus from iconic events and individuals to the everyday lives of people (Davis, 2023).

Through the exploration of three case studies — *Her Practice: Biases, Glitches and Oppressive Values or a Happy Domesticity, Moments of Familiarity, and How to Create Anew?*— presented in this paper, my goal was to foster a participatory design approach guided by people’s lived experiences of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, immigration status, language, and age (Costanza-Chock, 2020). Throughout this process, I dedicated time within the community’s space to understand their needs and collaborated with them at every stage of the design.

Using Design Methodology Tools Towards an Intersectional Feminist Approach

Her Practice: Biases, Glitches and Oppressive Values or a Happy Domesticity

With *Her Practice* (Georgina Pantazopoulou, 2022), the core of my Master’s in Interior Architecture graduation project at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, my objective was to explore the boundaries of an autobiographical narrative centered around my grandmother’s house in Greece. This exploration focused on developing a design methodology using this specific example as a foundation. The aim was to delve into gender roles within the domestic environment, examining existing patriarchal behavioral patterns through an intersectional feminist lens, and analyzing how spatial phenomena can influence future social behaviors.

Feminist writer and scholar Sara Ahmed in *Queer Phenomenology* discusses how orientation is not just about finding our way, but also about feeling at home (Ahmed, 2006). Ahmed links the sensation of being in a familiar place, such as home, with finding our sense of belonging, identity, and values. “Her Practice” focuses on all those elements that translate a space as home, taking as starting point an autobiographical story as it is my grandmother’s house in the Greek countryside under the prism of my architectural background. When the idea of this work started, I gained insights into the nature of intimacy; its significance in daily life and how it unfolds, “even when surviving under restrictions, controls and binary behaviours” (Pantazopoulou, 2022, p. 17). And, as also Jean Baudrillard writes in *The System of Objects* “Human beings and objects are indeed bound together in a collusion in which the objects take on a certain density, an emotional value - what might be called presence. What gives the houses of our childhood such depth and resonance in memory is clearly this complex structure of interiority, and the objects within it serve for us as boundary markers of the symbolic configuration known as home” (Baudrillard, 2020, p. 14).

The project represents a cartography of an existing house example, consisting of a typical floor plan of the Greek countryside in the early 1970s. The research started with a documentation of my grandmother’s nowadays

reality inside the house and of an analysis of the interior architecture qualities of the space. While the theoretical part of the project focuses on five particular facts of the house starting from the most patriarchal patterns and ending up with facts based on intimacy and equality, the design part develops a methodology based on only one space of the house (the kitchen) in order to be as coherent as possible the purpose of this work in the form of a participatory performance and installation project.

The project's research and design intend to narrate the interior stories to the external environment, initiating a conversation between the existing spatial characteristics and the audience. The goal is to enhance the architectural discourse by leveraging this specific example as a starting point for this dialogue. Stories enable us to engage with a world outside ourselves. By sharing our stories, we link our experiences with those of others (hooks, 2010). Focusing on the kitchen, a pivotal space where gender dynamics shape the household environment, this project delves into my grandmother's unique realm since there she can feel comfortable to express herself, imagine and create. As also Ahmed mentions "gender could be re-described in concrete terms of accommodation" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 122). Through an interactive journey, the proposal unfolds her narrative as well as my quest, and ultimately empowers others to engage—encouraging reading, listening, understanding, experiencing, and potentially connecting with an autobiographical story (Figure 1).

Navigating *Her Practice* as both a thesis project and a part of the Graduation show at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague came with inherent challenges tied to its feminist approach to the domestic environment. From the project's inception, I grappled with limitations arising from the unfamiliarity of the academic group with such perspectives. Presenting a feminist lens on domesticity in this context proved challenging, frequently placing me in situations of vulnerability, particularly when sharing personal stories. The feedback I received, which often pushed me towards conventional architectural language (floor plans, sections, 3D representations) to articulate the house's qualities, prompted a reassessment of the tools I wished to employ. This experience led me to reconsider my approach and make a pivotal decision—to open up a communal discourse by inviting others to participate. While grappling with challenges in my interactions with the academic staff, the diverse international backgrounds of many students at the Academy served as a source of encouragement. Their support prompted me to share my story with individuals carrying their unique narratives of domesticity, fostering a collective discussion on the potential alternative scenarios for my grandmother's house. This exchange has been instrumental in initiating a dialogue on the varied perspectives that my grandmother's house could embrace.

In essence, the project evolved into an exercise/exploration of how collective processes can facilitate the exchange of ideas and shared visions, shaping an alternative design paradigm, positioning myself as a practitioner rather than an expert collaborating with individuals from diverse cultural and geographical backgrounds within a participatory action. Together, we sought to reevaluate the impact of gender, age, cultural influences, and educational backgrounds on the framing of domesticity within a house environment (Figure 2).



Figure 1

Her Practice: Biases, Glitches and Oppressive Values or a Happy Domesticity, Royal Academy of Art, the Hague, Graduation Show 2022, interactive installation view.



Figure 2

Her Practice: Biases, Glitches and Oppressive Values or a Happy Domesticity, Royal Academy of Art, the Hague, Graduation Show 2022, working on alternative housing scenarios together with other participants.

Throughout this process, approximately 12 fellow students actively engaged in this dialogue, drawing upon their own lived experiences to propose alternative design outcomes based on inclusivity and equality. A specific focus emerged on reconfiguring the living room and kitchen, with a common theme of removing the dividing wall to position the kitchen as a central space within the home. Remarkably, this perspective aligned also with my grandmother's vision. Before delving into discussions with fellow practitioners, I revisited my grandmother's house and sought her insights into an alternative spatial arrangement. She suggested removing the wall, transforming the kitchen into the heart of the space, allowing her to seamlessly participate in social activities like dinners and family gatherings while cooking—a sentiment echoed by many practitioners later in the process. Moreover, another interesting aspect of this dialogue was the practitioners' growing comfort in sharing their own unique stories of places they once called "home," particularly from the viewpoint of expats, considering their current living conditions as "temporary." This exchange prompted a deeper understanding of the social, cultural, and political values shaping their domesticities. It ignited their imagination, leading to reflections on ways to enhance their living spaces for greater inclusivity and equality, finally making them more familiar.

Moments of Familiarity

Building on the foundation of the *Her Practice* project, my collaborator, designer, and researcher Ilaria Palmieri, and I initiated the Common Ground Practice. This collaborative endeavor forms a research and design collective with a primary focus on nurturing a secure space for marginalized communities. These communities encompass minorities, refugees, feminists, and advocates for decolonization with the aim of establishing a new dominant memory towards spatial practice. We embrace an intersectional approach that enriches the spatial discipline, ensuring that it resonates with diverse perspectives. As a part of our ongoing research, we introduced the "Moments of Familiarity" project. We invited by the Stichting de Vrolijkheid (a network consisting of professional artists, facilitators, volunteers, children, young individuals, and parents who organize workshops and art projects at Asylum Seekers' centers in the Netherlands) to craft and facilitate a workshop series for refugee people aged between 15-18 years old (Figure 3).

Confronting the complexity of this task, given our status as white European women expats in the Netherlands and not refugees ourselves, we confronted the challenge head-on. We made a deliberate choice to focus the workshop on the theme of temporary domesticities—a topic that we are already very engaged with both on a political and personal level, sharing our own experiences (although from a very different position)—to create an environment where participants felt at ease to express and exchange their unique perspectives. Our overarching objective was to collaboratively construct an alternative narrative of our current home infrastructures developing together with the Asylum community a design method based on the empirical accounts of lived experiences (Figure 4).

Entering their personal space and presenting ourselves as two individuals there to facilitate a creative workshop posed an initial challenge, as it wasn't



Figure 3

Moments of Familiarity, workshop designed by Common Ground Practice for the Asylum Seeker center in Den Helder, January 2023, *finding common grounds through connections*.



Figure 4

Moments of Familiarity, workshop designed by Common Ground Practice for the Asylum Seeker center in Den Helder, January 2023, *sharing stories from previous familiar spaces through drawing.*

immediately evident how to approach them. At that moment, about 10 people were already in the common space of the center, and many of them did not speak the languages we were familiar with for communication. However, those who spoke English assisted us in introducing ourselves and explaining the purpose of our presence. To our surprise, they promptly invited us to join them around a table to delve deeper into our plans for the workshop day. Engaging with them, we shared our diverse lived experiences through both words and drawings, initially without a specific goal in mind. Our only aim was to spend two hours together, creatively rethinking and reimagining our current living conditions. Given their sensitive backgrounds—many being refugees from Syria, Eritrea, and Ethiopia who had navigated the Mediterranean Sea and arrived in Europe under challenging circumstances, residing in various “temporary” spaces such as refugee camps or asylum seeker centers—we encouraged them to revisit their personal memories. The goal was to recall familiar stories associated with “home” and bring them to the forefront during the workshop day.

We initiated the workshop by sharing our personal stories related to familiar memories from our past domestic experiences. This approach helped create a comfortable space for them to draw inspiration and share their own stories. Throughout the workshop, we translated these narratives into drawings, sketches, and words, uncovering potential connections and commonalities among us. Considering the diversity in race, gender, age, class, and geographical and cultural backgrounds, we viewed this exercise as a powerful way to connect with a diverse world by listening to the different stories we are told. These stories serve as a means of understanding, thus embodying both influence and the potential for what could be (hooks, 2010). As a result of this process, participants began envisioning ways to reimagine their “temporary” homes, making them more familiar during their stay. All these stories were collectively translated into a map positioned at the center of their shared space. This not only allowed both us and them to learn and draw inspiration from each other’s stories, but also, through this participatory process, the knowledge produced in the collective exploration became visible (Figure 5).



Figure 5

Moments of Familiarity, workshop designed by Common Ground Practice for the Asylum Seeker center in Den Helder, January 2023, *creating spatial familiarities through a map representation.*



How to Create Anew?

The last case is the project *How to Create Anew?* a workshop series designed and hosted by Common Ground Practice invited by De Voorkamer, a project and community space that hosts events where people from diverse cultures and geographical backgrounds meet and connect in the city of Utrecht. The objective of the workshop was to delve into alternative ways of conceptualizing a home environment, taking into account the distinctions between participants' home countries and the Dutch context. The sessions unfolded individual stories through the shared language of lino and embroidery techniques (Figures 6-7).

The workshop unfolded across six sessions throughout 2023. The initial two sessions were dedicated to exploring the dynamics of being a guest and a host in various living situations. The next two sessions delved into a nuanced examination of gender roles within domestic environments, approached through a feminist perspective. The concluding two sessions served as a reflective platform for participants to contemplate and discuss the insights garnered from the preceding discussions. Craft techniques, particularly lino printing and embroidery, were chosen as a shared design language due to the participants' existing craft knowledge gained from similar workshops at De Voorkamer. Most of the participants were already members of the Voorkamer community, while others joined the space for the first time during the workshop series. Community members primarily come from neighborhood Middle Eastern and African countries, as well as European individuals residing in the Voorkamer. We as designers, approached this community space as practitioners who aim to rethink extractive design practices and replace them with methods that generate community ownership, profit, recognition, and visibility (Costanza-Chock, 2020) (Figure 8).

Figures 6-7

How to Create Anew?, workshop designed by Common Ground Practice and hosted by De Voorkamer, Utrecht, April – June 2023, using lino printing in order to share stories and design new housing scenarios.

Throughout the workshop, we introduced an empty white fabric placed on the table to initiate the lino workshop, collaborating with social worker Sophia Pekowsky, who regularly hosts lino workshops. This time, we challenged ourselves by entering a community already familiar with a specific design method, aiming to explore the theme of “domesticity” together in the upcoming sessions. Following a similar approach to the *Moments of Familiarity* workshop, we began the dialogue by sharing our personal stories about past experiences as either a guest or a host. Simultaneously, participants comfortably joined the discussion, sharing their stories around the table while engaging in the lino process to redesign these narratives on a shared fabric.

In the first two sessions, participants, despite the age, gender, or cultural background differences, associated the concept of “host” with intimate experiences within the house. Many recounted their “guest” experiences, often describing uncomfortable or unfamiliar situations. In the next two sessions, we delved into the role of gender based on our personal experiences in the house environment. Despite strong cultural differences, especially in diverse religious aspects, it was surprising that many participants, inspired by feminist values, connected their most intimate experiences with themes of inclusivity and equality within the house. They recognized patriarchal motifs as power



Figure 8

How to Create Anew?, workshop designed by Common Ground Practice and hosted by De Voorkamer, Utrecht, April – June 2023, using embroidery technique to reflect on the printed stories.

dynamics that provided less intimate feelings and narratives. All these stories were translated into lino stamps on the fabric, inviting participants to explore possible common grounds in the final two sessions through the embroidery technique (in collaboration with the Embroidery workshop in De Voorkamer). Together, we delved into existing stories, crafting alternative scenarios of domesticities using threads to integrate them. The resulting installation took the form of a tablecloth designed for use during De Voorkamer's weekly dinner gatherings, allowing the community to engage with the installation and fostering the creation of new memories around the communal table.

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Discussion

Sara Ahmed in *Feminist Life* writes that you might not be at home in an existing assignment. In order to be at home, you might have to become insistent (Ahmed, 2017). To grasp the significance of crafting a domestic environment, designers and architects must delve into the multifaceted layers of knowledge entailed in the design process. Given the intricacy of projects like house design, designers need to forge a close collaboration with future occupants. This collaborative effort aims to craft a space that authentically mirrors the personalities of its users, fostering inclusivity and nurturing the sense of familiarity that a home environment demands. Most of the tools that currently architects use when they are invited to design a house are based on the technical drawings such as floor plans, sections and 3D representation of the possible ideas. On the one hand, these tools play a significant role during the finalization of the conceptual and technical design outcome but, on the other hand, they exclude the future user from the design process making the design language complex and difficult to understand or to work with. Architecture and design disciplines need to develop new tools and strategies that reflect the significant shift in design from a rigid, outcome-driven force in the twentieth century to “a fluid and responsive medium” (Antonelli & Rawsthorn, 2022, p. 15).

This paper aims to highlight ongoing research without focusing on one final result but on the design approach itself. The three cases aimed to foster the topic of domesticity as space for further exploration and consideration, believing in the notion that crafting a homeplace, despite its fragile and precarious nature, possesses a radical political aspect (hooks, 1990). As architects and designers, we can often lose sight of how we should shape people's places; but when our design includes the views of individuals and groups, the project gains greater flexibility and value. The presented projects aim to provide a practice based on educating ourselves to listen carefully to people that are coming from different backgrounds regarding the gender, age, class, culture and geography. Rosi Braidotti in *Posthuman Feminism* refers to the critical cartographies regarding the way that different expertises can acquire knowledge from the current. Critical cartographies are the collectively composed tools by which marginalized subjects of knowledge can both speak truth to power and document what they already know, through experience of marginalization and exclusion (Braidotti, 2022). During those three cases, I approached my role as a designer as someone who is eager to learn how to engage in community-led initiatives by contributing their skills and resources, instead of expecting community members to join and follow processes that they start and control (Costanza-Chock, 2020). The three projects are based on a participatory design approach where everyone can inspire and influence each other during the process of sharing and discovering diverse stories of domesticities. According to the *Care Manifesto*, "we need localized environments in which we can flourish: in which we can support each other and generate networks of belonging. We need conditions that enable us to act collaboratively to create communities that both support our abilities and nurture our interdependencies" (Chatzidakis et al., 2020, p. 45).

Participatory design process can lead us to reconsider the design language in a post-dualistic way of thinking while using tools that are not following the specific standards of dominant ideologies such as modernism, we can have design proposals that cultivate the possibility. This possibility can guide us to rethink anew if indeed the current design lexicon is able to recognize the diverse populations across physical, social, and cultural differences (Place, 2023) avoiding to follow the universalism values which through asserting only similarities, marginalizes what is seen as dissimilar (Place, 2023). Radical domesticity can help us to understand better each individual's values and needs, addressing the question of how an intersectional feminist approach can provide a framework in order to discover whether a home environment can be a space that fosters diverse and ever-changing perspectives, enabling individuals to discover new ways (hooks, 1989) of living and interacting with each other. Therefore, "in order to reimagine the body, one must reimagine space" (Russell, 2020, p. 84).

Conclusion

Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* argues that "the coherence and continuity of the person are not logical or analytic features of personhood, but rather, socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility" (Butler, 2006, p. 23). Domestic environments serve as profound reflections of the unique psychosynthesis of their inhabitants. It's both intriguing and somewhat unsettling how

profoundly our immediate spatial surroundings, like our homes, can influence our personalities. Even the objects within these spaces, often underestimated, wield their own significant influence, shaping us as they interact with the environment from the day we are born. Recognizing the profound impact of the environment where we spend the majority of our time on an individual's mindset underscores the urgency and significance of analyzing the underlying reasons. This analytical pursuit becomes crucial for gaining perspective and understanding various social phenomena and behaviors.

Focusing on a collective process as approached through the participatory design method in three different cases, the designers can redefine power relationships, deconstruct artificial binary distinctions, and rectify inequalities related to gender, race, class, disability, and sexual orientation (Weisman, 1999) through their role as facilitators. This approach introduces a new index of design language that places dialogue and story sharing at the core of the process. The main goal of the discussed projects is to develop a methodology according to an alternative way of approaching the design of a domestic environment. Each of the three projects targeted distinct groups of individuals with diverse backgrounds who collaborated closely with designers to envision alternative versions of existing domestic situations focusing on our ability to gather knowledge about someone else's experience that is authentic, robust, and contextualized (Place, 2023). Emphasizing women and marginalized groups of people as identities who are limited to certain roles in society (Place, 2023), the cases aim to aspire the transformation of the design process itself into a tool for promoting more equitable interactions, underlining the importance of mutual teaching and learning throughout. Of course, the projects and results are recently developed works that leave space for further investigation and experimentation in the future of design.

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However, there are multiple limitations that this article has to consider, especially approaching such a sensitive topic through an intersectional feminist lens. Intersectionality opens up a process of exploration, highlighting the inherent complexity and contradictions in our surroundings that often exceed our expectations. This approach encourages a deeper understanding of how various forms of social identities and power structures interact, revealing layers of complexity that challenge simplistic views of the world (Davis, 2008). As also Kaisa Ilmonen had mentioned "intersectionality is filled with passionate detachments: metaspeech concerning intersectionality may be filled with enthusiasm and inspiration, but it is also filled with suspicion and underestimation. Even among intersectional enthusiasts there have been discussions on whether others were doing it wrong, or misciting some key texts" (Ilmonen, 2020, p. 350). Applying a participatory design process through an intersectional feminist framework means that we are always aware of the political power during this process considering who is included in discussions, who controls the project, and how decisions are made (Costanza-Chock, 2020). The three cases are presented through my unique perspective, shaped by my design background and enriched by the valuable feedback from fellow practitioners and participants throughout the design process. As these projects and their outcomes are recent developments, this article seeks to open avenues for ongoing exploration and experimentation in the evolving landscape of design.

Conflict of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Declaration of authorship

Georgina Pantazopoulou: conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, project administration, supervision, visualization, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing (revision after the peer-review).

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